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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: JOSEPH WU'S APPOINTMENT AS NEW TECRO CHIEF

Summary: Almost all Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies gave front-page coverage March 23 to a Taiwan Go player who defeated his Chinese opponent Thursday to become the new world champion. News coverage also focused on the 2008 presidential elections and other local issues. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a column in the pro-unification "United Daily News" commented on the appointment of incumbent Mainland Affairs Council Chairman Joseph Wu as the new TECRO chief. The article said given Wu's strong professional competence and President Chen Shui-bian's full trust in him, Wu will be the most powerful ever TECRO chief. End summary.

"The Unprecedented, Most Powerful TECRO Chief"

Reporter Chang You-sheng noted in the "United Notes" column in the pro-unification "United Daily News" [circulation: 400,000] (3/23):

"... Over the past few years, it has become the most important task for the TECRO chief to seek to upgrade to the highest level the treatment granted to Taiwan state leaders when transiting the United States. In addition, as TECRO chief, he will have to play the role of firefighter after the president gives unexpected and controversial remarks. As a result, even though Cheng Chien-jen and David Lee are both outstanding diplomats, they are destined never to become the best choices. Two primary criteria may be used to assess [the qualifications of] Taiwan's representatives or ambassadors to the United States: their own professional knowledge and the extent of trust they enjoy from the top authorities - namely, whether the top authorities have full faith in them. Cheng and Lee may be perfect in their professional competence, but they are, after all, not among 'the king's men.'

"The newly appointed TECRO chief, Joseph Wu, is the nephew of President A-Bian's key campaign contributor Wu Li-pei, so there is no problem of insufficient trust. Wu admitted that he has no prior experience of working overseas, but he said he has a complete understanding of A-Bian's thoughts and can therefore easily interpret Bian's ideas directly to the United States. Wu cited the example of A-Bian's 'Four Wants and One Without' remark. He said even though he had no idea of the remark in advance, he could grasp and help clarify the key points and true intent of Chen's announcement immediately after Bian delivered it, and he could therefore point out that there was no clash between the 'Four Wants and One Without' and the 'Four Nos and One Without' pledge Chen made in 2000. Wu's 'professional competence' was thus quite evident. Both Cheng and Lee, who were often in a sorry plight to probe in front of the Americans the true meaning of A-Bian's remarks, should really feel ashamed. Since Wu has A-Bian's full trust and is professionally competent, let's wait and see how he does his job."

YOUNG